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Translated for this Journal.

CLARA SCHUMANN.

BY FRANZ LISZT.

### II.

As long ago as in 1837, in the *Gazette Musicale* of Paris, we designated ROBERT SCHUMANN as one of those individualities, who inscribe their names with a sharp burin on the pages of history; as a man, whose works must draw upon themselves the attention of contemporaries, not needing their consent to outlive them; as an author, who by the deep stamp of his character, independently of the degree of sympathy that he might share, would certainly compel respect. Then we could say this only with an anticipating look into a future, which, now realizing our expectations, has assigned him so decidedly prominent a place among living composers. We mention his high merit here only to intimate, that the man, who of present composers is unquestionably the one who most *thinks music*, was inevitably called to exercise a great influence upon a female virtuoso gifted with a like propensity from birth. Since the relative equality of the two artists did not exclude a positive superiority of the husband to the wife, it necessarily followed that uninterrupted contact with an intellect so lofty and imposing, so confounded with her own ideal, and environed with her own visions, as Robert Schumann, stamped the indelible impress of his profile upon CLARA'S talent. And in fact CLARA WIECK was very far from what Madame SCHUMANN has become.

The former lived in a still transparent atmosphere, cooled by the soft breezes of life's morning; if gentle flames arose here and there, they were like Bengal lights, the mere blush upon young virgin cheeks. The purity of her execution did not exclude a certain involuntary play of

colors, which one might take for an unconscious coquetry. Roguish, careless humor was not strange to her. Her grace unfolded itself with an obviously indolent *laissez-faire*. One saw that the imagination of the young artist soared aloft, more from an inward and commanding impulse, than from self-conscious passion, or decided will. Unstable and capricious, she followed her own inclinations through the fair and mazy path, looked with delight at every flower, at every star, if they but breathed the slightest fragrance or glimmered with the palest splendor. She knew how with the most lovely grace to fling a spangled corner of the silvery veil that floated about her, over every object, which she would see sparkle with new beauty. The rhythmical accent struck her, more than she determined it; the movement of her play depended on the influence of the hour, the day, on sunshine and a tranquil mood. The melody did not remain always alike; now it came out nebulous and pale like the fair features of a Walkyr on a grey cloud, and now it advanced toward you bright and beaming as a gypsy child waving the tambourine. All this was involuntary, sudden, ravishing, so that even the imperfections of the young nature, through this purposeless and naive way, through the evident want of all thought of before or after, through the magic spell of a peculiar charm, through the innocent unfolding of all her excellencies, through the truthful simplicity of this poetic enthusiasm, which never dreamed that it was poetry, became almost more attractive than her more serious and solid attributes.

For a number of years Madame Schumann has played only now and then in public. Fate has led her recently to make new concert tours, and to turn her special attention again to virtuosity. As Weimar was one of the first cities embraced in her plan, we had for several days, during which the noble guest tarried among us, an opportunity to measure the significant development which her talent has been gaining since that time. The lovely Muses' playmate has become a consecrated, faithfully devoted, severe priestess. To the moist, youthful lustre of her eyes, there has succeeded a fixed and anxious look. The flower crown, once so loosely woven in her hair, now scarcely hides the burning scars, which the holy circlet has impressed so deeply on her brow. A mysterious light seems to stream from her fingers, when they make the strings resound. No more do those up-flickering waves of light encircle her, which made her hair thrill, and her heart beat quicker; all the warmth is concentrated into a glow, whose focus is known only to the hierophants of Art; they only may approach, to feel the electric

stream of divine fire, which without torch, without lustre, without flame burns all the more inextinguishably. An unimpeachable perfection characterizes every tone of this soft, suffering Sibyl, who, breathing heaven's air, remains connected only by her tears with earth.

Seldom again like her will a woman yield up her whole inward life to Art, only to feel and to enjoy in its domain. She has gradually attained to the subjective life of such masters as we find depicted in certain fantastical narratives, with whom the interests and importance of the whole globe are so completely merged in the sphere of Art, that to them the actual has become a dream, an unavoidable but painful interruption of *their* life, which in the eyes of the multitude appears a visionary life, but which they value as the only true reality. One easily sees, how she only wakes, so long as she hears music, or plays herself; how as the last tones die away, her soul shuts up, like the flower cup, whose petals droop ere the last ray of the sun has vanished, and only opens itself to the new spiritual day, when she is borne up on the wings of harmony. For her exquisite sensitiveness a false tone were a catastrophe, the failure of a passage a blighted inclination, a mistaken *tempo* a love unreturned, a wrongly conceived rhythm a despised deed of greatness, which in her excited inmost soul she must needs feel like so many wounds.

When she mounts the tripod of the temple, the woman speaks to us no more; she entertains us not as poetess about earthly passion, about the stormy strife of human destiny; she convinces us not by the boldness of her appeals, still less does she court our sympathies. A devout, believing and submissive priestess of the Delphian god, with trembling fidelity she performs his worship. Tremulously careful not to miss an iota of the oracle to be announced, not to accent a syllable falsely, she chastens her own feeling, so as not to become a guilty and a treacherous interpreter. She renounces her own suggestions, that she may declare the oracle as an incorruptible mediator, as a faithful expounder. She will explain no obscure passage according to her own individual inclination. For her, in the holy books whose simple pages have been received as valid after a severe test of their genuineness, there is nothing great and nothing small, but all is holy and must be accepted with undoubting, pious reverence. And she is so dominated by devotion, that the more variable human element recedes almost entirely out of view before this objective interpretation of Art. On the contrary, no one will excel her in the truthfulness with which she renders the masters that have become sacred to her through an intimate acquaintance. Among

the moments of lively admiration, for which we have to thank her, we mention one above all others, since in that we most distinctly recognized the transformation that had been wrought in her talent, from the time when Grillparzer saw in her hands the key, with which, however, her young fingers could not at that time open all the secret chambers of the casket. For years we could hardly compel ourselves any more to listen to the F minor Sonata of Beethoven (*Sonata Appassionata*), so much had mediocrity fatigued and vexed our ear by a cold, soul-less drawing of this work. But recently when it was performed by Clara Schumann, we experienced an inmost spiritual satisfaction, as when a painter finds again a sublime original, after having been long, long persecuted by *fade* and disfigured copies. For if anything can turn the sublime into the gall of bitterness, it is the ridiculous imitations of it.

The conscientious minuteness of Madame Schumann's preparations for her public performances, has often been remarked. How she searches through the key-board, and tries every tone, the sound of which, although correct, does not perfectly yield the desired resonance and coloring; how she takes care that her seat be not in the least too high or too low. How she not only like a knight, who manages his horse before the tourney, practices for long hours on the piano which she has to play, to get acquainted with all its fine points, its weaknesses and excellencies, but does this, where it is possible, upon the very spot where she is to play, that she may hear how every chord, every arpeggio, every crescendo and diminuendo of the flood of tone will be affected by the acoustic conditions of the room. In this we can see only a necessity of her nature, a consequence of her whole mode of being, of her conception of her Art, her duty to her calling and the difficulty of her artistic life-purpose, which does not permit her to trust the personal inspirations that depend upon the favor of the moment and upon chance moods, but rather convinces her that, to remain faithful to the dignity of Art, one must approach its every festival with the same earnestness, the same devotion.

And so we found the whilom mostly melancholy, but yet often cheerful, always fascinating fairy changed to the conscientious servant of an altar, animated, as it seemed, more by divine awe than by divine intoxication. When Talma at Erfurt represented the greatest kings in their best moments, he saw before him a parterre of kings. In the same way for Clara Schumann it requires a public of the majesties of Art, in order that the secretly struggling fire of her soul may so seize upon all hearers, as it makes her own breast heave. But she will always be admired by all because she is in fact spotless, and has by persevering carefulness, by energy of will and by ascetic devotion attained to a mastery, which stamps her in a certain manner as infallible. She is no pianist and concert-giver in the common sense of the word; her talent seems to us like a personification of the secular oratorio: a Peri yearning for her Paradise, in constant mystic contemplation of the Sublime, the Beautiful, the Ideal.

People say: "It pleased," or: "It did not please." As if there were nothing higher, than to please the people!—R. Schumann.

### Diary Abroad.—No. 15.

BERLIN, Feb. 13.—"German Rhetoric on the opera is chiefly nauseous iterations about MOZART's *Don Giovanni*." I thought of this sentence last night; one which I cut from some New York paper a year ago, and saved, because I was so amused at the absurd falsity of the statement, and utter ignorance of all that is German which the writer exhibited. I thought of it again last night, and felt that if the charge was true, there would be good ground for it, for *Don Juan* was given with all the splendor of the Royal Opera here. Not one of the solo singers of last evening is of uncommon excellence—several of the parts I have seen better: I have seen a better Donna Anna, than TUCZEK; a better Juan than SALOMON; a better Leporello than KRAUSE; BOSIO was a better Zerlina than AGNES BURY. Yet never was I so wrought upon, never did I feel the gradual progress of the drama, the stupendous climax of its finale—the awful effect of the contrasts so often occurring, the immense, unrivalled, unapproachable variety and richness of expression in the orchestral coloring, from the opening blast of the overture to the final chords—as last evening.

Nor did I ever feel more decidedly how much better it is to attend the production of an Opera—than the production of one or two singers. There is a vast deal in the putting of a work upon the stage—in the scenery, the chorus, all the little accessories, to say nothing of an orchestra properly balanced, trained and conducted. So last night I was thoroughly interested in *Don Juan* as a play. For the first time, I think, have I felt really the dramatic force of DA PONTE's text. The opening solo of Leporello came to me as something more than a comic description of his own troubles and aspirations—it gives a key to the character of his master, which is fully explained in his "Catalogue Song." It prepared me for the entrance of Don Juan and Anna. At last the libertine has met a rebuff—evidently his first; for once he is unsuccessful. From this moment his downfall dates. Adding murder to his attempt upon Anna, casts the die. This I felt last night; and now, as I read over OULIBICHEFF's view of this opening scene, I am by no means satisfied with it.

Through the whole play I followed Anna's influence upon the fate of Don Juan, feeling that the result was inevitable. But I am more than ever unwilling to admit HOFFMANN's idea that Anna may too have been a victim of the Don. When vengeance had at length overtaken him, I wanted, strangely enough to be sure, that closing scene, which is now never played, and the existence of which is forgotten, in which the other characters appear, and all ends happily.

Curious, that as I left the house I met an American gentleman, whose text-book was prepared by Da Ponte, in New York, in 182- (?) for the performance of the work by the GARCIA troupe. Unluckily the title page was gone, but Da Ponte's preface is there. MARIA GARCIA, afterwards MALIBRAN, was the Zerlina. That of course was the first performance of *Don Juan* on our side of the Atlantic. Will it ever be given there with the scenic and orchestral effects of last night? That ball scene for instance—three bands, three halls, three kinds of dances at once!

March 16.—That unfortunate lover of music, Agindos, who for his sins has been banished to Paris this winter, has at length been pitied by the Fates, and allowed to hear a Symphony by the Conservatoire. Long abstinence having made him hungry to raging, I fear that he has surfeited and that his wits are slightly disordered. Thus he writes to my friend Pagan.

PARIS, March 12.

My dear Pagan:—I have just come down.

"Come down, from where, pray?"

Why, from the upper regions, not like Icarus nor Vulcan, but in a respectable manner, gently, soberly; and I now find myself upon terra firma. The thing was after this wise, viz:—I went yesterday to a concert of the Conservatoire. I had moved heaven and earth to get a ticket—and succeeded! This same Conservatoire had been haunting me all winter. Everybody said "you must hear this orchestra before you can be entitled to speak." I was becoming desperate—when finally a friend brought me a ticket. I turned over my fable, broke a chair, and nearly broke my neck, besides (not

doing) other antics—which were down on the bill but omitted by particular request on the reception of said ticket.

The concert was advertised for two o'clock, P. M.,—"deux heures précises"—I came very near going at twelve for fear of being late,—I *did* present myself at one and a half.—Excellent officer at the door—good soul—only tore off a corner of my ticket, and didn't say it was false—that some one had played a cruel trick upon me—no; he let me pass and then I wanted to make him a speech on the spot as an acknowledgment of my gratitude; but I could not get beyond "Mounsheer!" to save my life. Good people showed me my seat and I took possession of it with the composure of the oldest subscriber. I had time to look about me before the musicians came in—*Grande Salle des Concerts*—that's what the programme calls the concert room. I should call it a "sell," not a *Salle*. It reminds me of the theatre at Göttingen—or that of any such little provincial town. It is elliptical in shape; has three galleries, besides the parterre, and accommodates about 1200 persons. Every nook and corner is occupied, and there is a large number of "standees." I never saw a place more completely crammed. The audience was evidently composed of people who had music in their souls. You felt this when a gentle murmur, a sympathetic pulsation, "a shivering along the arteries," followed some touching passage.

The leader of the orchestra, M. GIRARD, a great, stout man, rapped for silence, and not a sound was heard. The first piece upon the programme was "*Symphonie en Sol mineur, de MOZART*," an old acquaintance of ours, bringing you and the Veda vividly to mind. How they played it! The tears gushed into my eyes—I wanted to cry like a child. Music has seldom affected me so. You could almost hear the audience sob; the musicians themselves exchanged glances full of feeling, full of meaning at their own exquisite rendering and interpretation of some of the passages. The Scherzo was "*bisssed*,"—(encored, as we say in America) as it always is and deserves to be. I never heard anything more delicious in my life. You remember the introduction to this Symphony? It reminds me of the instrumentation in the "Magic Flute." This piece accomplished, the musicians talked together about it; the audience talked about it; and everybody felt himself a better man. I could have gone home and had something to think of all my life.

The second piece was an Aria from HAYDN's "Creation," beautifully sung by M. LEVASSEUR.

Third, Music to "Egmont," by BEETHOVEN, the connecting text read by M. GUICHARD, the vocal pieces sung by Mme. MIOLAN-CAVALHO; both accomplishing their parts as well as they could have been done. It would be vain to attempt to convey to your mind an adequate conception of the perfect manner in which the orchestra rendered this sublime composition of Beethoven. I never understood nor felt its power before. If I could give my impression of "Hamlet" in a letter, or describe Mt. Blanc, I might hope for success with "Egmont"—but as it is, I pass it over as too great a subject for my pen. I can only say that the orchestra played it almost as if inspired.

Fourth, Quartet by CHERUBINI. I could very well have dispensed with it, but I suppose it was performed because there must be at least one piece by a Frenchman, by a composer claimed by the French.

Fifth and lastly, Overture to "Oberon." What an appropriate morceau to close with! The close of this overture is so particularly fine as to form a finale worthy of so great a concert. It was played with a perfection, too, exceeding if possible that of those which had gone before it, and sent us home, all well satisfied with ourselves, with the world, and with everything we had heard. It was at this concert that I began my ascent—do you wonder that it took me twenty-four hours to return to sublimity things?

Now you will ask if the orchestra of the Conservatoire is better than our Royal friends in Berlin? I reply, impossible to play better; they play as well, and in fact it seemed to me that the Berlin orchestra had been transported in a body to Paris, and that I was listening to my old friends, not to new acquaintances. A musician might detect a difference. I am inclined myself to the opinion that a German orchestra, under a German



leader, and in the heart of Germany itself, could better interpret Beethoven and Mozart than foreigners. Still the orchestra here played "Egmont" in a manner beyond all criticism. I should say the Conservatoire is equal to any in the world, and if not number one, it is not number two.

This is the second concert I have attended. At the first they played the 'Heroic Symphony' of Beethoven. There were some mistakes committed in the Scherzo, evidently an accident of rare occurrence, as it created an immense sensation; otherwise the performances were, like those of yesterday, worthy the great fame of the orchestra. Still I have heard the 'Heroic Symphony' played better in Berlin. So much for music.

## Musical Correspondence.

From NEW YORK.

APRIL 9.—I did not write you last week because there was hardly anything to write about, particularly in my special line, that of concert-music. And even now you will have to be satisfied with a mere chit-chat letter, as I did not attend any of the concerts of last week, partly because I was not able to do so, and partly because they attracted me too little. At that of the PRYNE and HARRISON troupe, on Monday, I am told, a very large audience was assembled, who were greeted, according to the *Musical Gazette*, to "a deluge of ballads." The performances of Miss Louisa Pyne, and some of those of her sister, seem to have been the only part of the entertainment which was beyond mediocrity. It is to be repeated to-night, I hear. A public rehearsal of the N. Y. HARMONIC SOCIETY took place on the same evening, and is said to have been very satisfactory. I regret that a permanent engagement on that night of the week has prevented me from attending any of these quite interesting and attentive *réunions*. Of the concert of the Opera troupe, on Saturday evening, the least said the better, according to all accounts. The house was quite empty, and the performances, with a few exceptions, very unsatisfactory. Among them were selections from ROSSINI's *Stabat Mater*: the *Stabat Mater*, or the Crucifixion of Christ, of which you make mention in your last, is a new composition by Mr. FRY, the bringing out of which is postponed until the 19th inst.

On Saturday afternoon the associate members of the PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY had an opportunity of admiring the excellencies of your friend Mr. BERGMANN as leader. And I, for one, did admire his energy and enthusiasm, and the strictness and pertinacity with which he "reined up" at the slightest fault, as well as the greater nicety of shading to which he actually compelled the orchestra. The latter will have to keep wide awake while he sojourns among them; for his Bostonian reputation, and the fact of his being a stranger, gives him a control over them which Mr. EISEL cannot have, who has had to create his own position, and is not yet firm enough in it to be able to presume upon it with the heterogeneous and unruly spirits that compose the body of which he is the head, and of which he only has made what it is now. No one can regret Mr. Eisefeld's illness more than I, nor rejoice more heartily at the present prospect of his ultimate recovery, but I cannot help thinking that this season of thorough training will be a very good thing for the Philharmonic orchestra.

I must thank you for taking my part against my fair antagonist, who expresses her opinion so decidedly in your last. But I would also say a few words in my own defence, and as gallantry forbids my addressing myself personally to an unknown lady, (who does me great honor by supposing me to belong to her sex,) you must allow me to make you my medium.

First of all I would clear myself from the imputation of being prejudiced against native talent. Far

from this, I am too truly American, not to rejoice at any triumph of my countrymen in Art, or welcome gladly the rapidly increasing number of young artists springing up around us, and the love of true music which is slowly, but I hope, surely spreading in our land. For this reason I looked forward joyfully to Mr. MASON's return to this country, and his appearance here as the first thoroughly American pianist. I was present at his *Matinée* and Concerts in this city, admired heartily his ready solution of all the most difficult problems of the modern school, was delighted with his masterly rendering of the Handelian Fugue, honored him for playing something besides his own compositions, (which are, however, well worth playing,) and heard him then play the *Impromptu* of CHOPIN several times, in a manner which completely satisfied me. I, too, love that composition as well as any one can, and because I love it so, and know it so well, am very jealous of its rendering, and I still maintain that on that evening, the apple of discord between your unknown correspondent and myself, it was not played as well as it should have been. And instead of my being singular in this opinion, I have as yet met no one who did not agree with me, of many of my friends who were present.

As regards the looseness of playing which I mentioned, that expression refers more to the school to which Mr. Mason belongs. *Chacun à son goût*; some prefer that school or style, others the crisp, nervous, forcible style of which Mr. SATTER's playing is a type, and, in a measure, that of your townsman, Mr. DRESEL, neither of which, I am sure, any one can accuse of being stiff or mechanical. I was perhaps wrong in attempting a comparison between the two styles, as they are so totally different.

Mr. Mason is to play WEBER's *Concertstück* in our next Philharmonic concert, and I trust my fair opponent will not question my interest in native talent, when I say that I sincerely hope that even the most critical will have no fault to find with Mr. Mason's performance.

BORONIS.

APRIL 10.—Absence from the city prevented my giving you my usual report last week. But as there was not much to tell about, and as you have yourself told what there was, I am excusable.

Last Wednesday *Lucrezia* was given at the Academy to a poor house. But I have hardly ever heard it performed better. STEFFANONE sang and acted superbly, and BRIGNOLI, BADIALI and VESTALI were capital. On Saturday evening a "sacred and secular concert" was given, the second part consisting of parts of ROSSINI's (not FRY's) *Stabat Mater*. About three or four hundred persons were present. Fry's *Stabat Mater* is to be given on Thursday.

And now for the grand event of the season, the performance of "William Tell." But let me first correct the assertion of the bills and some of the papers, that this is its first performance in America. From the "*Despatch*," whose musical and dramatic editor, Mr. C. B. BURKHARDT, is excellent authority in such matters, I learn that "William Tell" was produced in the original French, in New Orleans, anterior to 1841, and (also in French) at the Park Theatre in this city, on the 16th of June, 1845, and a number of times afterwards, with the following cast: Tell, M. GARRY; Arnoldo, ARMAND; Walter Furst, DOUVRY; Melchthal, BERNARD; Gessler, C. DOUVRY; Rodolpho, COEURLOT; Matilda, Mme. CASINI.

I was only able to be present at the Academy last night for a very short time, and therefore can not give you much account of the performance. The audience, however, was the largest I have ever seen in the building, and, from all reports, though it was not dismissed till 12 o'clock, was well pleased with the performance. And indeed the managers did their utmost for a good and successful representation.—

Several new scenes were added, the choruses and supernumeraries were increased and everything done for its success. It did my eyes good to see the Academy so crowded full for once at least. The cast is as follows:

Matilda, an Austrian Princess,.....	Signora Steffanone.
Gessler, the Austrian Governor,.....	Signor Rocco.
Rodolpho, Captain of the Guards,.....	Signor Quinto.
Edwige, the wife of Tell,.....	Signora Avogadro.
Albert, her son,.....	Signora Bertucca Maretzek.
Guglielmo Tell,.....	Swiss { Sig. Badiali.
Arnoldo, in love with Matilda,.....	Patriots, { Sig. Boicioni.
Walter Furst,.....	{ Sig. Coletti.
Leutholdo,.....	Signor Cronza.
Melchthal, the father of Arnoldo,.....	Signor Muller.
A Fisherman,.....	Signor Vietti.

All the solo singers are said to have done better than usual. The opera itself requires a great deal of care in its representation to be given in a satisfactory manner; for from the following plot you will see that there are many situations which need great scenic and mechanical assistance.

ACT I.—The people of the five cantons of Switzerland, are groaning under the oppression of their Governor. TELL, who has already determined upon procuring their independence, endeavors to excite the young ARNOLD, who is in love with MATILDA, to embrace the cause which inflames his own patriotism. At this moment, LETHOLD having slain a soldier who was carrying off his daughter, appears and implores the fishermen to bear him across the lake. They all refuse, but TELL embarks with him as the soldiers in pursuit of him arrive. In their rage at losing him, they bear away the venerable pastor, the sire of ARNOLD, a prisoner.

ACT II.—TELL, who has surprised ARNOLD while having an interview with MATILDA, informs him that his father has been murdered. In his remorse, the young man determines upon joining him. The people of Unterwalden, Schwitz and Uri then approach. Their plans are laid, and the cry is first breathed "To Arms."

ACT III.—The cap of the Austrian Governor, GESSLER, has been erected upon a lofty pole, and all who are present are required to bow before it. TELL refuses to do so, and the soldiers who recognize him denounce him to GESSLER. Knowing his fame as a marksman, the Governor orders him to pierce with an arrow an apple which is placed upon the head of his son. TELL is in despair, but compelled to make the attempt, succeeds. As overpowered by his emotion he sinks into the arms of his friends, an arrow falls from his vest. It had been intended for the heart of GESSLER, if TELL had slain his son. In his rage, the Governor orders both of them to be seized, but MATILDA claims the boy's life in the name of their sovereign, and TELL only is borne away, as the Swiss breathe their curses upon GESSLER.

ACT IV.—ARNOLD arms the people for the purpose of saving TELL. MATILDA, who has restored the patriot's son to his mother, proposes to save the father by remaining with them as a hostage for his safety: when a storm arises, and TELL is seen steering the boat on the lake, in which GESSLER had borne him away. Nearing a rock, he takes a desperate leap from the boat and manages to rejoin his family. GESSLER effects a landing on a more distant part of the shore, and comes in pursuit of him, when TELL seizes his arrow and takes a deadly aim. GESSLER falls. The first blow has been stricken for Swiss Liberty.

As it is announced for repetition on Wednesday and Friday, and will probably be continued still longer, I will endeavor to give you a more detailed account of the performance in my next.

The German opera at Niblo's commences again to-night. And in connection with this, I must severely, very severely blame Miss LEHMANN. I understand that she refused to sing in the *Freischütz* or any other German opera, unless BELLINI's miserable *Capuletti e Montechi* should also be given, so that she could shine as Romeo. Accordingly it is announced for to-night. I shall go, but only for a little while. I saw JOHANNA WAGNER in it, and if she could not make me like it, I do not think Caroline Lehmann can. And besides, the absurdity of producing it in German, by a German troupe. It will hurt the "good cause" vastly.

Mme. DE LA GRANGE could not get ready in time for the Baltic, but is certainly expected by the next steamer. For the next Philharmonic (April 21st,) we have the *Tannhäuser* overture, the Seventh Symphony (under Mr. BERGMANN's excellent direction,) MENDELSSOHN's *Loreley*, and two choruses from "Elijah," by the MENDELSSOHN UNION, and WEBER's *Concert-Stück*, to be performed by WILLIAM MASON.

R.

## From BERLIN.

MARCH 9.—What a concert! I had been told repeatedly by Dr. Blank—who divides his time equally between his patients and music—that Mr. Music-director STERN'S Singing Society had become really a rival of the Sing-Akademie in numbers and in the excellence of its performances; which assertion I had taken *cum grano*, supposing he was blinded by partiality. Last evening this society gave its first concert, and this morning I make all necessary and proper acknowledgments to the Doctor for having doubted him. The concert was in the hall of the Theatre, a room with a gallery, half the main floor of which was occupied by choir and orchestra; so that the audience numbered possibly five hundred persons—a good portion of the gallery seats being empty. Who says that the Germans are not the most musical people in the world? Five hundred persons—free tickets and all—in a city of 430,000 inhabitants, to hear a chorus of some two hundred, an orchestra of about fifty members, and two solists of some distinction, perform the following programme:

1. Psalm CXIV: "When Israel went out of Egypt," for eight-voiced chorus and orchestra, by FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY.
2. Concerto for the Violin, by MENDELSSOHN, performed by Herr Concert-meister JOACHIM.
3. Fantasia for Piano, Orchestra and Chorus, by BEETHOVEN. Piano-forte part by Frau CLARA SCHUMANN.
4. Romanza (F major) for Violin and Orchestra, by BEETHOVEN. Executed by JOACHIM.
5. Kyrie and Gloria, from the Great Mass in D, by BEETHOVEN.

No. 5 was given for the first time in public in Berlin, say the newspapers—and an audience of some five hundred was there to listen! The 114th Psalm is short but worthy of MENDELSSOHN, reminding me in some of the painting of the mighty music in "Elijah." Why don't they sing these things at home? As to JOACHIM and the Concerto, I can say nothing. Perfection! perfection!

The *National Zeitung* man writes a great deal of the flattest nonsense about music, and makes the funniest mistakes sometimes; but this, about the Choral Fantasia, No. 3, of the programme, hits the mark.

"This," he says, "is a gentle prelude to the Ninth Symphony, a parallel piece to that sublime creation taken from the domain of the graceful and delicious. It begins with a long continued solo on the piano-forte. The master in a state of dreamy thought or reverie seems to be preluding upon the instrument to which he has been appointed, and while his fingers are gliding carelessly over the keys the soul is apparently collecting itself. Here all is vague and unconnected. Themes come peeping up only to be lost in broad arpeggios, and no distinct form comes out in all this flood of tones. Out of patience with his poor success, the composer calls upon the orchestra to help him give expression to the feeling which is struggling within for utterance. At first the Contrabassi answer in a sort of recitative figure, and after the other instruments have fallen in one by one, the piano-forte gives out a melody, which is singularly like the 'Freude, schöner Götterfunken,' in the Ninth Symphony; and in which our Tone-Poet at length has found that means of expression he has so long been seeking. Now the orchestra divides itself into groups, curiously examining the newly-found theme, throwing it about and varying it in all sorts of playful ways. The flutes pass it to the oboes; they to the clarinets and bassoons; then the string quartet gets possession of it, and finally we get it from the rejoicing chorus of all the instruments. Still there is more in it than piano-forte and orchestra can make known; there is yet something more to be expressed. They do not yet give up the attempt, but vary it into new forms, lead it through the most manifold harmonic changes, and at last

repeat it in the minor, as if angry at their own weakness. At last, near the close, the human voice comes to their assistance, a full chorus joins the quartet, and surrounded as with a halo of tones from the joyous instruments, sounds forth the 'The Praise of Harmony.'"

The only attempt, so far as I know, ever made to give this Fantasia, (how perfectly this title fits it!) in America, was that of HATTON, in Boston, some eight years since, at that concert of his in which a public, which had never failed to make him sing double the number of songs set down to him in the concerts of other people, left him to play and sing to empty benches. I have never been able to get over my shame and indignation at the shabbiness exhibited on that occasion.

I need record nothing of CLARA SCHUMANN'S performance of the piano-forte part last evening, nor of JOACHIM'S playing in the Beethoven romance which followed.

It is surely a record-worthy event when one hears for the first time any part—though only two numbers—of that work of Beethoven which he himself declares his "greatest and most successful." The greatest, because in it the musical ideas were, like the subject of the composition, of the grandest order—what so sublime to a devoted Catholic like Beethoven as the words of the Mass?—and because in the breadth and scope of the work it surpassed all else which he had written. The most successful, because he felt that he had here achieved his greatest success in obtaining a full and complete mastery of his ideas and in musically expressing them. May one judge a work of the extent of this great Mass by its two first movements? If so, I feel that Beethoven judged his own work correctly. As I heard that *Kyrie*, and that *Gloria*, so nobly sung, I went in imagination into some grand cathedral and listened to it under the influences of the place for which the mass was written, and where alone the question of its success as a work of Art can be decided. I was for the moment in Antwerp, Vienna, or Strasburg, and the mighty flood of tone came down to me from the organ-loft as the prayer of the kneeling multitude—"O Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy"—or as the "Glory to God in the highest" of that same multitude in an ecstasy of religious feeling.

Yes, his greatest and most successful!

Some time or other that crowning work of Christian architecture, the Cologne Cathedral, will be finished; the last stone will be laid, the last blow of the hammer will have been struck; the sculptor, the painter, the decorator will have gathered up their tools and departed, and the noblest work of architectural genius will stand there perfected! Then from every city in Europe will come together the Malibrans, the Maras, the Linds of that day; the Lablaches, Rubinis, and Brahams; the Joachims, Ernsts, and Berlots; all who vocally or instrumentally are above and separate from the mediocre—will come up to this "house of the Lord, to assist in the dedication thereof." But what in all music shall be found worthy of the place, the occasion, that chorus, that orchestra? Then and there will the great Mass in D, by Beethoven, find a fitting time and place for its production!

A. W. T.

To send light into the depths of the human heart—that is the Artist's mission!—R. Schumann.

\*Not in his letter to CHERUBINI, as the London *Musical World* had it recently in a leading editorial article, the style of which might do perhaps in a Diary, but whose flippancy and exhibition of ignorance upon the historical point in question are anything but honorable to a journal of as much pretension as the said *Musical World*. Cherubini's solemn statement that Beethoven's letter never reached him is sufficient answer to the greater portion of the article. As to the *Musical World's* opinion of Cherubini's compositions—Beethoven's estimate of them was quite the reverse.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

## THE BELLS OF VENICE.

I love the bells of Venice,  
They sound across the sea  
Like the music of a vision—  
Or a Seraph's minstrelsy.  
Throughout the day they're flinging  
Their sweetness on the air,  
And through the night they're ringing  
Beneath the starlight clear.

The deep, sad bells of Venice!  
They sing a dirge-like lay;  
They tell of pride forgotten,  
Of splendor passed away—  
A wild and wondrous story  
Of the ages that are gone,  
Of the faded, fallen glory  
Of that city, still and lone.

The strange, wild bells of Venice!  
They call a wondrous train  
From their graves in the stately churches  
To their ancient haunts again.—  
Maidens fair and matrons holy,  
Youths and gray-haired sires of yore,  
In shadowy barks come gliding slowly  
O'er the moonlit waves once more.

The sweet, soft bells of Venice!  
They rang when Portia wed,  
They sounded sad, a requiem  
O'er Desdemona dead;  
And pealed in triumph glorious,  
When, o'er the glittering tides  
The lovers brave, victorious,  
Bore home the rescued brides.\*

The holy bells of Venice!  
They call the soul to prayer,  
When they break the Sabbath stillness  
That fills that haunted air.  
They pealed at the wondrous union  
Of the city and the seas,  
And they rang at the strange communion  
Of the softened enemies.†

The dreadful bells of Venice!  
They tell an awful tale,  
That makes the strong heart tremble,  
And the ruddiest cheek grow pale;  
Of terror and oppression,  
Hands of steel and hearts of stone,  
Wild despair and still depression—  
Drowning cry and dying groan.

O the bells, the bells of Venice!  
Sweet is their mingled strain;  
But ne'er be their music awakened  
By such cruel hands again!  
Let them swing o'er the proud old city,  
Slowly sinking, day by day,  
And call upon the world to pity  
Both her crimes and her decay. E. J.

## Musical Chat-Chat.

Thus humorizes the Philadelphia *Evening Bulletin* about—start not, ladies—General MARIO! "The last canard of the European press is the story that Signor Mario, who enjoys the dignity of a Sardinian noble and rejoices in the title of the Count of Candia, is disposed to join the Sardinian army destined for the Crimea. The story is soberly copied by American papers, and there are probably people that believe the gentle little tenor singer is really grown patriotic and belligerent; that "his voice is for war," and that he is in earnest when he sings "*sul campo della gloria*." Well, it may be so, and Signor Mario may be disposed to abandon the luxurious life of a *primo tenore*, the charms of GRISI's society, the applause of "fair women and brave men," and the ador-

\*For a beautiful version of the story of "The Brides of Venice," see Rogers' "Italy."

†Pope Alexander III. and Frederick Barbarossa, reconciled by the intercession of the Republic of Venice.



ation of the enthusiastic COUTTS, for the chance of glory and a grave in the Crimea. If so, the world will have to lament the spoiling of a good singer to make a bad soldier; for Signor Mario will find the bonâ fide soldier's life in the field very different from the sham soldier's life of the opera. The little squad of thirty or forty basses and tenors that make a grand army on the stage, is a much more manageable force than a division in the field, and the best martial air with which the prince of tenors ever rallied his forces in an opera, would be of little avail in the trenches of Sebastopol. What will the world do if Mario does really get an attack of the military fever and does really go to the Crimea? How will the fashionable world ever endure the abrupt and total cessation of his charming "spinto gentil," or, as he preferred to sing it, "angiol d'amor"? How much fashionable prospective happiness will be ruined, if the gay circles of Paris and London are never more to hear his "il mio tesoro," his "una furtiva lagrima" and his "io pur sentii le placide!" What will Grisi do, if the partner of her loves, dramatic and real, should rush madly to the fight? Final, and most agonizing query—what will poor Coutts do? We see no help for this charming lady but an immediate enlistment, in male apparel, in the Sardinian contingent, or a purchase of a choice loop-hole in the fortification of Sebastopol, from whence, with a hundred-horse power opera glass, she may inspect the movements of General Mario."

ALFRED JAEHL's accident, we are glad to see, was not serious. He has recovered his prestidigitation sufficiently to play in Paris, as we learn by the exquisitely rose-bordered card which we have just received, containing the programme of his concert in the Salle Sax, on the 12th of March. He was assisted by the violinist HERMANN, with whom he played the "Kreutzer" Sonata, and the singer Mme. ANNA BERTINI. Jaell also played a Serenade by Rubinstein, a Fugue by Bach, his own Reminiscences of Wagner's operas, Fantasia on *Norma*, &c., &c. The ecstasies of the Parisian critics about Jaell are quite amusing; who shall say that the sublime art of eulogistics, commonly supposed to be peculiar to our Yankee newspapers, has reached its acme here? Listen! Thus saith *La France Musicale*, from which we translate skippingly: "Another brilliant pianist: let us applaud anew; his name is ALFRED JAEHL, and he comes to us right straight from America, where he has conquered *une grande illustration*."—"Figure to yourselves *fingers of steel*, which become at times *fingers of velvet*, something by turns thundering and unctuous (*foudroyant et d'onctueux*) (!); a rapidity to give one the vertigo, a *sweetness to ravish the angels*!" "These pianists, they are all astonishing! If M. Jaell were only a powerful mechanic, we should admire him only moderately; but he composes, he writes for his instrument a music brilliant and original." "Seated at the piano, in the attitude of master Wolfram, the pianist beholds gardens sown with stars quick with inspiration, those beautiful gardens where, according to the divine expression of the poet, spirits linger. Then archangels clothed in white combine the chords and direct the artist's hands. Would he write fantastical music? Myriads of *diablotins* appear, who, poised upon the desk, turn over the pages, dance sarabands upon the blazing pedal rods, while imperceptible gnomes move the pedals." Bravo! Monsieur GIACOMELLI! But the article has also solid praise for Jaell: "He showed an equal familiarity with all styles." "In his Wagner reminiscences, one observed, besides an execution of rare power, a habit of harmonic progressions, a science of assimilation and development by no means common with virtuoso composers." "His *Au bords du Mississippi* is a page of the best colored and full of poetry." The Sonata of Beethoven was "admirably executed," &c. And the critic pleads for a second and a third concert. *Succès oblige*.

The masked balls of the Grand Opera in Paris promise this year to be unusually brilliant, the musical direction of them being confided to the well known ability of STRAUSS. The orchestra which he is to direct is to be composed of not less than 200 musicians, distributed in the following manner: 40 first violins, 30 second violins, 20 altos, 12 violoncellos, 30 basses, 10 clarinets, 6 flutes, 4 hautbois, 4 bassoons, 12 cornets à pistons, 6 trumpets, 12 trombones, 6 ophycleids, 1 cymbals, 1 big drum, 2 ordinary drums, and 4 harps. The first ball was to take place on the 23d, and to open at ten o'clock in place of midnight, to enable the orchestra to play for the first time in public the various novelties which compose Strauss's album, such as "Teresa," the "Cascade," the "Diable au Bal," the "Schottisch of the Guides," "Miss Lucy," "Mathilde," and other pieces. After the concert the theatre was to be delivered up in the usual manner to the votaries of the dance.

Galigiani says: There has been a contest at the Opera in Lisbon between Mmes. CASTELLAN and ALBONI, as to which should sing the part of Amina in *La Sonnambula*. The latter lady carried the day with the director, but the public quiz the performance very much as supremely ridiculous, from the unfitness of the *artiste* for the part from her increasing obesity. The engagement of Alboni, who receives an exorbitant salary, is described as a complete failure, and the manager almost ruined.

Miss JULIANA MAY, of Virginia, (a niece, it is said, of Joseph Gales, the editor of the *National Intelligencer*), who has been studying for some years in Italy, made her debut at Verona, on the 17th of February, in Verdi's *Rigoletto*. The Italian journals, from which our friend Willis translates in his *Musical World*, pronounce it a success and predict for her a distinguished career.—This reminds us of what a friend wrote us about the young American tenor, Mr. SQUIRES, a glowing report of whose appearance in Italy we copied some weeks since: He was born in Bennington, Vermont, in 1826. After trying various kinds of business for his friends' sake, his love for music finally got its way, in spite of the general aversion to the life of a singer. His voice, says our friend, is a pure, fresh tenor of the MARIO quality, and he can make a chest tone like a silver trumpet up to B natural above the staff. He has naturally taste and expression, loves all that is beautiful, is well educated, and—what is not a bad thing for a tenor—he is handsome. He tried to learn to sing some six years since in Boston, but with poor advantages. Afterwards he sang for two years in St. Paul's church at Albany, during which time he concertized with Mr. and Mrs. VINCENT WALLACE, as far West as Chicago, and sang in Mrs. BOSTWICK'S Soirées in New York, and always with a warm reception. The late JONAS CHICKERING was one of the first to recognize the rare promise of his voice, and to speed him on his way to Italy two years ago.

The *Stabat Mater* is announced to be performed in Philadelphia, under the direction of Professors THUNDER and ROHR. Thunder and roar! Do you hear that, O Jullien?—Mme. BOSIO is engaged at a high figure to sing in St. Petersburg, while TEDESCO, just returned thence, is more than ever praised by the Parisians.

The health of ROBERT SCHUMANN is still precarious. CLARA SCHUMANN has written a letter to WILLIAM STERNDALE BENNETT, whose guest she was to have been, stating that she must therefore renounce her proposed visit to England this season.—The classical pianist, CHARLES HALLÉ, met lately with a severe accident in Manchester, by a door closing suddenly on one of his fingers. It was at first feared that amputation would be necessary, but it is now hoped that he will be able to play at one of ELLA's two remaining "Winter Evenings."

The London *Athenæum* may well marvel at the titles of our Yankee books of Psalmody; especially the latest, "The Young Shawm." We are not aware if it be yet settled what sort of a monster a full-grown Shawm is or was. Enough, we suppose, that it belongs to the musical Saurians and Megalotheria of biblical antiquity.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, APRIL 14, 1855.

### CONCERTS.

I. BENEFIT TO JOHN P. GROVES.—We entered the Music Hall last Saturday evening, only to see again the usual fate of concert-giving this year in our once so music-loving city. There was a remarkably good concert, and a remarkably thin house. We only hope that that scattered handful of people did not represent all the benefit that was realized in sales of tickets, and that the young native violinist, who proved his talent and devotion so unmistakeably that evening, will not want for the means to cultivate his art abroad. If the concert answered that end, we will not complain. But it was really a good concert, and we were sorry that we too had to lose the larger portion of the programme.

The orchestra was excellent, composed of over forty instruments, essentially the same that compose the Musical Fund orchestra, and under the bâton of Mr. ECKHARDT it told admirably in the accompaniments. We did not hear the best orchestral pieces, the overtures to *Fidelio* and *William Tell*; but in what we did hear we were struck by the euphonious ensemble and the marks of thorough drill and leadership. Mr. MILLARD sang the opening tenor cavatina from *Ernani* with fresh, elastic voice, and great ease, finish and expression; and Rossini's *Mira la bianca luna*, by Mrs. WENTWORTH and Mr. MILLARD, was one of the sweetest and purest pieces of duet singing that we have heard in the concert room for many a day. It was neatly and sympathetically accompanied, too, on the piano, by young Mr. LANG of Salem.

But what pleased us most, what gave us the newest sensation, was the Quartet for French horns, composed by Mr. ECKHARDT, and played by Messrs. HAMANN, FRIES, ECKHARDT and KLUGE. In the execution we do not remember anything of the kind so true, so flowing, so luscious in the blending of the tones. In the soft passages the quadruple stream of harmony flowed as smoothly as from organ pipes. The genius of the instrument was nowhere perverted, by attempting a kind of solo virtuosity out of its own sphere, and yet there was all the light and shade, the free melodious movement of a quartet of voices. The composition was not only perfectly adapted to the instruments, but interesting in itself, and solid. Throughout a considerable length of contrapuntal movement, imitation, &c., it charmed the listener along with it. We congratulate the author on producing something so much more felicitous than the usual attempts at ingenious novelties of this sort.

Master GROVES himself played two solos, one on the violin, by DAVID, and one on the viola, by Eckhardt. The first alone we heard. It was after the usual type of solos, an introduction, a melody, with variations in major and in minor, and

all sorts; cantabile adagio, and bravura close; enough to show that he has attained to no small mastery already of the requirements of a modern virtuoso, that he has a very fair idea of style, and that his intonation is remarkably true. His appearance too was modest, and all went to show that he was well entitled to the opportunities he seeks, of a more advanced artistic culture among the orchestras and masters, and in the musical atmosphere of Germany.

#### II. MR. SATTER'S SECOND CONCERT.—

Again an admirable concert and a miserable audience—so far as numbers were concerned.—There is no accounting for the shyness sometimes, even to the most liberal and honest solicitations, of this same musical taste of Boston. An artist of the decided stamp of Mr. Satter, who gives you programmes of the rarest and the richest order, who has not only the skill but the will to interpret to you out of all the choicest treasures new and old of piano-forte composition, from BEETHOVEN to LISZT, comes here and plays in that delightful Chickering Saloon, where all who go are sure to be good listeners; and furthermore he gives us the fresh maiden voice and charming talent of a singer like Miss LOUISE HENSLE, and yet the room is hardly half full! We cannot help thinking it a reproach to Boston, when the dollars leaped so readily and so repeatedly from pockets as long as the opera lasted, and when for dancing "light brigades" it is thought a pretty thing to lose the dollars and the night's rest and the bloom upon the cheeks besides.—But those who did go Tuesday evening felt themselves decidedly the gainers.

The bill of fare, as at the first concert, was remarkable, perhaps a little too much so to excite the uninitiated palate. Four out of the seven pieces played by Mr. Satter, were orchestral compositions transcribed for piano. We have long heard of the wonderful talent LISZT has for this transferring of a symphony or overture, with all its parts, upon the key-board of the single instrument. His most famous exploit in that line was his last, the arrangement, which we noticed some time since at length, of the Ninth Symphony for two pianos. The *Pastorale*, the "Tell" overture, &c., were earlier efforts, and for two hands only. Of course only a Liszt could do these things; the arrangements must have grown in the act of playing them; they must have been played first, before they could be written; for it was only to Liszt's unprecedented facility of execution that such arrangements could occur as possible. Of course, too, only a very few pianists have learned to execute them when written, and these have had to learn the secret and the style thereof from Liszt himself. Mr. Satter, young as he is, is one of them. He proved it in his first piece, the overture to "William Tell." We could not before have imagined so much of the orchestral breadth and coloring and contrast to be representable upon the piano. The opening violoncelli strains preserved their identity to a singular degree, under his expressive touch; while the piano, the last from the Chickering manufactory, and less powerfully brilliant than the one played last week, had a sympathetic, soulful quality of tone, well suited to the moist, lake-like atmosphere, and tranquil picturing of all the first half of the overture. The effects were brought out with beautiful distinctness and

freshness; the storm, too, (notwithstanding that friend FRY calls it "as bad a botch, in the way of description, as the storm in Beethoven's *Pastorale*,") was made grandly imposing, and the flute-like Alpine echoes on the clearing up were deliciously clear. Nothing could exceed the crispness, the vivacity and energy of the quick-step movement, and the violin-like vividness and boldness of the florid figures at the end. Greater strength, or greater delicacy we have not heard from any pianist—and perfect neatness, certainty and clearness through the whole.

No. 2 consisted of three smaller pieces: a very sweet, expressive little *Pastorale* (not the symphony,) by whom composed we know not; an *arioso* transcribed from the *Prophète*, by KULLAK, which did not interest us much; and another Minuet (of his own arrangement) from a MOZART Symphony, the well-known one in G minor. This is not like the equable and flowing Minuet he played before, but more bold and impetuous, though the Trio in the major is charmingly naive and pastoral. We like these little tit-bits, reminders of the great works, flung in sometimes thus incidentally, when they are so complete in themselves and played to such perfection.

The artist's rendering of the BEETHOVEN Sonata in D minor, op. 29, one of the "Tempest" Sonatas, and companion piece, as we have said, to the *Sonata appassionata*, pleased us even more than his rendering of that. It was free from extravagancies; it was a conscientious, finished, and poetic rendering of an exquisite musical poem. How expressively those little recitative sentences sang themselves in the first movement! one might fancy Miranda's voice. The Adagio was played with true feeling; and the "airy fairy" Ariel-like gracefulness, crossed ever and anon with passionate humors, of the Rondo finale was as nicely conveyed as we should think it possible for human fingers. Were we to confess any want, it would be perhaps here, as in all of Mr. Satter's playing, of more of a gradual *crescendo* instead of so much positive *fortissimo* in the strong passages. It is very, very seldom that we listen in a concert room to a Beethoven Sonata with such real satisfaction.

The overture to "Oberon," Mr. Satter's own arrangement, was also remarkable as recalling so much of the magical coloring of the original instrumentation in the first half, although it seemed to us less clear and satisfactory in the stronger portions than the "Tell." But the triumph of the evening, as showing the union of astounding virtuosity with the poetic conception and reproduction of one of the loveliest tone-creations ever written for the orchestra, was the young artist's playing of Liszt's arrangement of "the Pastoral Symphony" for two hands. It certainly was wonderful both on the part of arranger and performer. Not a note of any of the twenty instruments seemed wanting anywhere; it was all there, obediently answering to the touch of the ten fingers. And so much of the charm of Beethoven's music, here as everywhere, is intrinsic, residing in the musical thought itself, that when the notes were as faithfully and appreciatively touched as they were here, when to such unlimited, easy mechanical grasp of all its contents there was added such power on the part of the interpreter of entering into the spirit of the music, we really heard the Symphony and felt it all come home to us in a very enjoyable manner:

always understanding of course that the reminiscence thus awakened of the orchestra is one great element in the charm. The two first movements came out as warm and fresh and summer-like, as one could wish. Neither atmosphere, nor light and shade, nor breezy motion, nor any of the thousand little exquisite effects were wanting. The dance of the peasants had the weight of an orchestral unisono; and the storm was wild and grand and vivid, as it might have risen in the composer's mind; the strength of Mr. Satter's playing here was prodigious; he certainly made no "botch" in playing it, whatever Beethoven did in writing it. Of course it is not safe from simple hearing to declare that Liszt has neither added nor omitted aught; but the general impression was true to our best abiding impression of the Symphony. Once only, near the beginning of the first Allegro, we thought there was a bright dash of the *piccolo* too much, something that seemed fitter for the thunder and lightning passage than for this quiet scene. It may have been our fancy.

Miss HENSLE sang charmingly. Her first piece was the *Una voce*, from "the Barber," which was given with not quite all her *verve* and free abandonment, but yet with admirable style and a rare felicity in the execution of some of the ornamental points. In the second part she sang an air from *Beatrice di Tenda*, of a more sustained, dramatic pathos, dealing largely in long high tones, which she held out with a pure and silvery voice of ravishing sweetness. It was encored with great enthusiasm.

RICHARD WAGNER IN LONDON.—The man of the "Music of the Future" has actually appeared and "waved his bâton," in the very centre of the conservative citadel of the Past, in the old Philharmonic concerts of London. Greeted with ribald jeers so long, and at length bidden to their feast, the bugbear came and stood among them, not so much a man of marble, as a man of fire, and great was the dismay and general the dance among the critics. *A cenar teco m'invitasti*, &c. And how liked they the supper to which they found themselves invited in return? We shall see. We quote from the reports of some of the more eminent survivors. The concert took place on the 12th of March. We will first cite our amusing and original contemporary, the London *Musical World*, which gives two articles, first an editorial ode or rhapsody, in the following, luminous, dignified, calm manner:

The die is cast. Richard has waved his *bâton* in Hanover-square. The "Seven Wise Men" are in ecstasies. A beat "up" (the only beat) is substituted for a beat "down" (a silly beat). Michael Costa is quenched. The "great Tritto" is ignored. The new prophet is the only prophet. Liszt was right.

"List!—list!—O Liszt!"

Strange readings were enforced, and *sforzandi* yet more vigorous (we had thought that impossible); while the last pages of the *Hebrides* went faster than probable, and made noise enough to drown the waters that grumble and wail and rush and roar, in the darkness of Fingal's Cave. The slow chords in the second part of the *Zauberflöte* were reiterated. A flat found its way back into the *Eroica*. The "Child" (Mozart), the "Erroneous" (Beethoven), the "Stupid" (Spohr), the "Old Wife" (Haydn), and the "Jew" (Mendelssohn), were beaten, as they never were before, in the Philharmonic Temple. The members of the band were as demons, and shook and



trembled with enthusiasm. Shapes like unto those which delirium paints upon darkness were flitting and grinning ghastly in the orchestra. The new prophet, &c.

"List!—list!—O Lis(z)t!"

The star of Richard shone as a moon in the heavens. The new Prophet was the only prophet. Praeger was there, with "the books" in his mind's coat pocket. He wore a Mackintosh and Fez. The "Reactionary" stood still, as the sun at the word of Joshua. A new king had arisen that knew not Michael; and Michael was forgotten by the fiddlers, the quidnuncs, and the *Aristarchi*. "It was a glorious victory." Nothing lacked but the statue of William Pitt, which, had the Director sent it a reserved place, with a copy of *Lohengrin*, would doubtless have stalked from its pedestal in the square down to the very concert room—like the stony Commandant at Don Giovanni's supper, scaring away the Philharmonic Leporello—for William hated Jews, and would have exulted in Richard, who crucified Felix and Giacomo. There is but one Wagner, and Richard is his prophet! There is but one Richard and Wagner is his scribe. The ENTELECHIA of harmony, "he is,"—as Aristotle says, &c. &c.

And then a regular concert criticism, as follows:

Herr Wagner was received most courteously. He is a short spare man, with an eager look and a capacious forehead. He conducts with great vivacity, and beats "up" and "down" indiscriminately. At least we could not, with the best intentions, distinguish his "ups" from his "downs;" and if the members of the band are down to his "ups" and up to his "downs" by the end of the season, we shall be ready to present each of them with a quill tooth-pick, as a forfeit for our own lack of discernment. The Haydn symphony—a glorious old lady—went with immense dash—dash is the word. Of delicacy we observed no sign; while the *sforzandi* were intenser than even under the despotic stick of Mr. Costa. So many quickenings and slackenings of tempo we never heard in a Haydn symphony before. Perhaps it is in "the books," however, and was all right. As for Mendelssohn's overture, that magnificent Jewish inspiration—(fancy a Jew who could grope about Fingal's Cave, and give such a splendidly poetical account of his impressions!) was taken slower than necessary at the beginning, and faster than possible at the end. It was rather a "zig-zag" sort of performance, but wonderfully vigorous and animated. The pianos (we do not expect *pianissimos*) were disregarded from one end to the other; and this was felt to be especially disadvantageous at the beginning of the two grand *crescendos*, in the middle and in the *coda* of the overture. Perhaps Herr Wagner maintains that the music of Jews should always be as monotonous as the "Clo'-clo'-clo'!" which agonized the poet in the streets.

As for the *Eroica*, that was all "sixes and sevens"—now firm, now "shaky," now overpoweringly grand, now threatening to tumble to pieces. To us it was most unsatisfactory. To others it was evidently otherwise, since they praised it loudly. When the beat is understood, however, by the end of the season, it will be a very different thing; but then the concerts are over. What of that? There is next season—1856; and is not Herr Wagner a conductor, as well as a composer, for "the future?" The glorious overture of that divine "child" with the long name—WOLFGANG AMADEUS THEOPHILUS CHRYSOSTOM (etc.) MOZART (who will soon be teaching the "Future" to look back longingly to the "Past"—or we are much mistaken), went, as we thought, better than anything else. The long chords of B flat, that usher in the incomparable second part, with such pomp and ceremony, were reiterated (not sustained), according to the Weimar fashion. About this we have nothing to say.

Altogether our impression of Herr Wagner, as a conductor, is confused. By and by, we shall better be able to give something like a decided opinion; at present we are tongue-tied.

*Tongue-tied!* We should think so after all that, and from sheer fatigue of the unruly member.

The *Athenaeum* is short and acrid:

Nothing could be stranger than the performance. The violins were rarely together. The pauses in Haydn's Andante were very long pauses, and every forte was a fortissimo. Mendelssohn's overture was hurried and muddled, without ease or undulation,—and Beethoven's Symphony was a fatiguing piece of exaggeration, stuck full of fierce *sforzandi* and ill-measured *rallentandi*. . . . Was it worth while to affront the profession in London, and to send a deputation to Zurich for no better result than this? Spirit Herr Wagner indubitably possesses,—but of his sense as a reader of great compositions by great masters, Monday's concert gives us a poor opinion; and it remains to be seen how far his fits and starts will be able to impress our orchestra, should he be intrusted with the production of any unfamiliar music.

So much for one side of the question. And now for the other. The *Times* (DAVIDSON,) still abuses the composer, but admits that "there was quite enough in the execution of the symphonies and overtures to show that Herr Wagner is a man of intelligence and firmness, an original and perhaps an intellectual thinker." The N. Y. *Musical Gazette* has the following letter from a London correspondent, which evidently represents the opinion of not a few:

The audience rose almost *en masse* to see the man first, and whispers ran from one to another; "He is a small man, but what a beautiful and intelligent forehead he has!" Haydn's symphony, No. 7, (Grand,) began the concert, and opened the eyes of the audience to a state of things hitherto unknown as regards conducting. Wagner does not beat in the old-fashioned, metronomic-automaton manner; he leaves off beating at times—then resumes again—to lead the orchestra up to a climax, or to let them soften down to a pianissimo, as if a thousand invisible threads tied them to his *bâton*. His is the *beau idéal* of conducting; he treats the orchestra like the instrument on which he pours forth his soul-inspired strains. Haydn's well-known symphony seemed a new work through his inexpressibly intelligent and poetical conception. Beethoven's *Eroica*, the first movement of which used to be taken always with narcotic slowness by previous conductors, and in return the funeral march always much too fast, so as to rob it of all the magnificent *gran dolore*: the scherzo, which always came out clumsily and heavily; and the finale, which never was understood—Beethoven's *Eroica* may be said to have been heard for the first time here, and produced a wonderful effect. As if to beat the Mendelssohnian hypercritics on their own field, Wagner gave a reading of Mendelssohn's *Isles of Fingal* that would have delighted the composer himself; and even the overture of *Die Zauberflöte* (magic flute) was invested with something not noticed before. Let it be well understood that Wagner takes no liberties with the works of the great; but his poetico-musical genius gives him, as it were, a second sight into their hidden treasures; his worship for them, and his intense study, are amply proved by his conducting them all without the score, and the musicians of the orchestra, so lately bound to Costa's reign, already adores Wagner, who, notwithstanding his republican politics, is decidedly a despot with the orchestra. In short, Wagner has conquered, and an important influence on musical progress may be predicted for him. The next concert will bring us the ninth symphony and a selection from *Lohengrin*, which the directors would insist on, notwithstanding the refusal of the composer. . . . The *Post* agrees perfectly with us.

THE MENDELSSOHN CHORAL SOCIETY give a concert to-night on a novel plan. It is mostly instrumental and is given in compliment to the Ladies of the Society. The orchestra of 42 members, under Mr. ECKHARDT, will play BEETHOVEN'S Seventh Symphony, which we

have had no chance to hear before this winter, although we have had all the others save the Ninth—also the *Masaniello* overture for a finale. Mr. GROVES plays a viola, and Mr. KLAESER a cornet Solo; and that horn quartet of Mr. ECKHARDT's will be played again. Miss BOTHAMLY, Miss TWICHELL, Mr. WETHERBEE, and others will contribute vocally. We hope the Music Hall will be crowded.

Next Saturday (21st) is fixed for the Benefit Concert of the MUSICAL FUND SOCIETY, and we trust the real friends of music will not grudge the spending of a little time during the intervening week in interesting their neighbors to attend. Let Boston at least show a tardy justice this time, and see to it that this concert shall redeem the losing winter of the Fund Society.

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